## TOPIC 6. NUCLEOPHILIC SUBSTITUTIONS

### **OBJECTIVES**

- 1. Describe two pathways (mechanisms) to account for substitution at sp<sup>3</sup> carbons bearing an electronegative atom (leaving group)
- 2. Discuss the effect of starting material (substrate), leaving group, reagent (a nucleophile) and reaction conditions on the course of a reaction
- 3. Recognize functional group transformations and synthesis of new molecules in one step by substitution of an appropriate material
- 4. Explore the substitution chemistry of alcohols and ethers







$$-c -L$$
 Nu:  $-c -Nu$  L:

We are only considering  $sp^3$  (alkyl) substrates in this section. Molecules with leaving groups on  $sp^2$  (e.g., vinyl, aryl) or sp (ethynyl) carbons do not react in fashion described in this section

#### **Nucleophiles**

Donate a pair of electrons: to an electrophile (lone pair or pi bond)

Neutral

 $H_2C = CH_2$ 

Anionic

HÖ⇔

 $H_2O$ 

#### **Electrophiles**

Receive a pair of electrons: from a nucleophile



#### Effect of Leaving Groups on Electrophilicity



C-L bond must be polarizable

C-L bond must be relatively weak

L needs to be able to accommodate a pair of electrons

 $\Rightarrow$  Good leaving groups are weak bases



#### Substitution: What is the Mechanism?

substitute /'sêb-,stê,t(y)üt/ vb: to put in the place of another



## **TWO CLASSES OF REACTION**

Substitution reactions can be performed under different conditions which give rise to dramatically different outcomes. Nucleophilic substitution reactions can be classified as one of two types, based on these experimental observations.

In order to develop predictive tools, we need to *understand* reasons *why* these observations are important. That is, we need to develop proposals for two different mechanisms which are consistent with the two sets of data and *which we can use to predict the outcome of other reactions.* 

## SUBSTITUTION AT 1° SUBSTRATES: <u>BI</u>MOLECULAR NUCLEOPHILIC SUBSTITUTION (S<sub>N</sub>2)

#### Examples





#### **Kinetics**

CH <sub>3</sub> CH <sub>2</sub> Br	+ NaOMe $\longrightarrow$ CH <sub>3</sub> CH <sub>2</sub> OMe		+	NaBr
[CH <sub>3</sub> CH <sub>2</sub> Br]	[NaOMe]	relative rate		
0.01 M	0.01 M	1		
0.02 M 0.01 M	0.01 M	2		
0.02 M	0.02 M	4		

Conclusion: Rate = *k*[R-L][Nu]

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d1 d-laptop, 8/6/2007

Mechanism of Nucleophilic Substitution of 1° Alkyl Halides: The  $S_{\rm N}2$  Reaction

#### Chirality

Chiral R-L forms R-Nu with opposite stereochemistry (inversion of stereochemistry, "Walden Inversion")



Interpretation:

Nu**:** 

#### Nucleophilicity

Basicity and nucleophilicity are not the same, but they are related phenomena

A negatively charged nucleophile is more reactive than its conjugate acid.

CN > HCN  $OH > H_2O$  RO > ROH

In a group of nucleophiles in which the nucleophilic atom is the same, nucleophilicity parallels trends in basicity.

 $RO^{-} > HO^{-} >> RCO_{2}^{-} >> ROH > H_{2}O$ 

Steric bulk hinders nucleophilicity

*Across* a row in the periodic table, nucleophilicity parallels trends in basicity.

$$CH_3^- > H_2N^- > HO^- > F^-$$
  
 $NH_3 > H_2O$ 

*Down* a column in the periodic table, trends in nucleophilicity of anions depend on the choice of solvent.



*Protic solvents* solvate the anions (nucleophiles) by H-bonding and cations (counterions). Small electronegative anions particularly are well solvated, lowering their nucleophilicity. *Trends in nucleophilicity in polar protic solvents increases going down a column of the periodic table* 

Polar aprotic solvents cannot hydrogen bond to anions (but do solvate cations). Trends in nucleophilicity in polar aprotic solvents parallels trends in basicity.



Large <u>*neutral*</u> nucleophiles ( $H_2S$ ,  $PR_3$ ) are highly polarizable and can donate more electron density than smaller neutral nucleophiles.



#### Relative Nucleophilicity (in MeOH)

	,		Relative Nucleophilicity
Excellent Nucleophiles	CN	Cyanide	126,000
	HS⁻	Thiolate	126,000
	Ē	lodide	80,000
Good Nucleophiles	⁻он	Hydroxide	16,000
	Br⁻	Bromide	10,000
	$N_3^{-}$	Azide	10,000
	NH <sub>3</sub>	Ammonia	8000
	$NO_2^-$	Nitrite	5000
Fair Nucleophiles	CI	Chloride	1000
	CH₃COO⁻	Acetate	630
	F	Fluoride	80
	СН₃ОН	Methanol	1
	H₂O	Water	1

Nucleophilic relative strength is measured by relative rate in an  $S_{\rm N}2$  reaction (but depends on substrate, solvent type, etc.)





#### Leaving Group Ability

Rate: -I > -Br > -Cl >> -F

C-L bond must be broken – weaker bonds are more polarizable, easier to break

Bond strengths (kcal/mole):

C-F 116 C-Cl 79 C-Br 66 C-I 52

Overall: A good substrate for bimolecular nucleophilic substitution should have:

- 1. Weak C-L bond
- 2. Polarizable C-L bond (ease with which the electron distribution in the bond is distorted)
- 3. Leaving group that can accommodate a pair of electrons

	Leaving group		р <i>К</i> <sub>a</sub> of conjugate acid
Good Leaving Groups	١	lodide	-10
	Br	Bromide	-9
	CI	Chloride	-7
	$RSO_3^-$	Sulfonate	-6.5
	H₂O	Water	-1.7
Very Poor Leaving		<b>-</b>	
Groups	F	Fluoride	3.2
	HS	Thiolate	7
	CN	Cyanide	9.2
	HO	Hydroxide	15.7
	RO	Alkoxide	16-18
	H_	Hydride	35
	¯NH <sub>2</sub>	Amino	38
	⁻CH₃	Methyl	48





Energetics of One-Step (i.e., concerted) Reaction



Reaction coordinate

## Practical Applications of $S_{\rm N}2$ Reactions: Functional Group Transformations at 1° and 2° Carbons



Intramolecular S<sub>N</sub>2 Reactions - Cyclizations









*Problem:* How would you prepare 2-phenylethanethiol from 1-iodo-2-phenylethane?

![](_page_16_Figure_2.jpeg)

*Problem:* How would you make the following compound from 1bromopropane and any other starting materials?

![](_page_16_Picture_4.jpeg)

Problem: Which of the following would undergo the fastest reaction with 1-bromopropane in a polar protic solvent?

(a)  $Ph_3N$  or  $Ph_3P$ 

(b) 1.0 M CH<sub>3</sub>ONa or 2.0 M CH<sub>3</sub>ONa

## Synthesis of Alkynes and Alkanes: Alkylation of Acetylide Anions

![](_page_17_Figure_4.jpeg)

R' must be 1°

## SUBSTITUTION AT 3° SUBSTRATES: <u>UNI</u>MOLECULAR NUCLEOPHILIC SUBSTITUTION (S<sub>N</sub>1)

#### Example

![](_page_18_Figure_2.jpeg)

Experimental observations of kinetics, chirality, substrate structure and effect of nucleophiles for this reaction are inconsistent with the  $S_N 2$  mechanism

#### **Kinetics**

![](_page_18_Figure_5.jpeg)

Result: Rate = k[R-L] independent of concentration of Nu

Mechanism of Nucleophilic Substitution of 3° Alkyl Halides:  $S_N$ 1

#### Practical Applications of S<sub>N</sub>1 Reactions: Solvolysis

The only practical  $S_N$ 1 reactions are *solvolyses*, reactions in which the solvent also acts as the nucleophile. These reactions arise because solvents which are polar enough to facilitate dissociation of the substrate are also nucleophilic

S-H = HOH,  $RCO_2H$ , ROH

#### **Substrates**

Rate: 3° > 2° (1°, methyl not reactive)

Interpretation:

Me<sup>Me</sup> Me

Stability of Carbocations Carbocation Relative Energy (kcal/mol) Methyl 0 Ethyl -37 *i*-Propyl -65 *t*-Butyl -83

- More substituted carbocation stabilized by hyperconjugation

#### Effect of Leaving Group

Rate: -I > -Br > -CI (F: unreactive)

C-L bond must be broken – weaker, polarizable bonds are easier to break

Bond strength: C-F > C-Cl > C-Br > C-I

- Overall: A good substrate for unimolecular nucleophilic substitution should have:
- 1. Weak C-L bond
- 2. Polarizable C-L bond (ease with which the electron distribution in the bond is distorted)
- 3. Leaving group which can accommodate a pair of electrons

#### Effect of Nucleophile/Solvent

Rate independent of *concentration* of nucleophile (solvent) Rate depends on *polarity* of solvent

#### Chirality

A single enantiomer of substrate with the leaving group on the stereogenic center reacts to give product that consists of a mixture of both enantiomers.

![](_page_21_Figure_4.jpeg)

![](_page_21_Figure_5.jpeg)

![](_page_22_Figure_0.jpeg)

![](_page_22_Figure_1.jpeg)

Reaction coordinate

# SUMMARY: FACTORS EFFECTING $S_N 1$ AND $S_N 2$ REACTIONS

![](_page_22_Figure_4.jpeg)

![](_page_22_Figure_5.jpeg)

![](_page_22_Picture_6.jpeg)

One-step (concerted) mechanism

Substrate: Methyl>1°>2°>>3° - Steric bulk hinders attack of Nu Rate = k [substrate] [nucleophile] Chirality

- Inversion

Often performed in polar aprotic solvents, *e.g.*, DMF ( $Me_2NCHO$ ), DMSO ( $Me_2SO$ ) to dissolve substrate and ionic reagent, and increase reaction rate

## A Limitation to Reactions of Alkyl Halides with Nucleophiles

Elimination competes with substitution if the nucleophile is too basic or if the electrophile is too crowded (we will explore this further in Topic 7)

![](_page_23_Figure_2.jpeg)

## SUBSTITUTION REACTIONS OF ALCOHOLS

#### Alcohols as Acids and Bases

![](_page_23_Figure_5.jpeg)

Alcohols are weak acids and weak bases. Acid-base chemistry is important in activating the electrophilic and nucleophilic character of alcohols, respectively.

#### **Conversion Of Alcohols To Alkyl Halides**

Alcohols do not react with sodium halides to give alkyl halides!

## Alcohol + H-Hal

 $3^{\circ}$  Alcohols:  $S_N 1$ 

![](_page_24_Figure_5.jpeg)

1º Alcohols: S<sub>N</sub>2

![](_page_24_Figure_7.jpeg)

#### **Other reagents**

$$R \rightarrow O \rightarrow H \xrightarrow{SOCl_2} R \rightarrow Cl$$

# $\begin{array}{c} \text{MESYLATES AND TOSYLATES IN S}_{\text{N}} \\ \text{REACTIONS} \end{array}$

![](_page_25_Figure_4.jpeg)

*Problem:* How would you prepare 2-phenylethanethiol from 2-phenyl-1-ethanol?

![](_page_26_Figure_1.jpeg)

*Problem:* How would you make the following product from 1-propanol and any other starting materials?

![](_page_26_Figure_3.jpeg)

## SYNTHESIS OF ETHERS

#### Synthesis of Ethers: Williamson Ether Synthesis

Overall Reaction and Mechanism

$$\begin{array}{ccc} R- & \stackrel{1 \text{ or } 2^\circ}{\underset{\text{ Na}}{\ominus}} & R & \stackrel{1 \text{ or } 2^\circ}{\underset{\text{ R}}{\rightarrow}} Br (Cl \text{ or } I) \end{array}$$

## Designing Williamson Ether Syntheses

You could suggest making either C-O bond of the ether.

![](_page_27_Picture_2.jpeg)

![](_page_27_Picture_3.jpeg)

#### Synthesis of Symmetrical Ethers: Dehydration of Alcohols

![](_page_27_Picture_5.jpeg)

At higher temperature a competing reaction predominates (elimination of water to form an alkene, see Topic 7)

![](_page_27_Picture_7.jpeg)

## Reaction of Ethers: Acid-catalyzed Hydrolysis

![](_page_28_Figure_1.jpeg)

![](_page_28_Figure_2.jpeg)

## SUBSTITUTIONS IN SYNTHESIS

You should prepare a chart of all of the types of reactions that have been covered so far...

....we'll add more later.

![](_page_29_Figure_3.jpeg)

### **ONE-STEP SYNTHESES**

It is important to recognize transformations which can be performed in a single step. Use the thought process:

- What can the product can be made from? PRODUCT ⇒ STARTING MATERIAL

- The synthesis itself is  $\mathsf{STARTING}\;\mathsf{MATERIAL}\to\mathsf{PRODUCT}$ 

*Problem:* How would you prepare the following from appropriate alkyl chlorides?

(a) CH<sub>3</sub>CH<sub>2</sub>SH

(b)  $(CH_3)_2 CHCN$ 

 $\rightarrow$  CH<sub>2</sub>-C=C-CH<sub>3</sub>

from starting materials with 7 or fewer carbon atoms

*Problem:* How can you prepare the following two compounds from the appropriate alkyl bromide?

(a) Methyl phenyl ether, Me-O-Ph

(b) (S)-2-Pentanol, CH<sub>3</sub>CH(OH)CH<sub>2</sub>CH<sub>2</sub>CH<sub>3</sub>

*Problem:* How could you perform the following synthesis? [An introduction to designing multi-step syntheses]

![](_page_31_Figure_1.jpeg)

## **TOPIC 6**

## **Types of Questions**

- Recognize factors which influence the mechanism of nucleophilic substitutions (SN1 versus SN2)
- Predict outcomes of substitution reactions